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BOOK REVIEWS

The Question as a Measure of Efficiency: A Critical Study of Classroom Practice.

By ROMIETT STEVENS. (Teachers College, Contributions to Education, No. 48.) New York: Columbia University, 1912. Pp. vi+95. \$1.00.

Dr. Stevens has made a skilful and much-needed diagnosis of one of the serious weaknesses of class work. She has studied a large number of class exercises in secondary schools, many of which have been stenographically reported. Her center of interest is the relationship between questioning and effectiveness. The results should make principals and teachers think and work for better conditions. The number of questions asked in a forty-five minute period runs as high as one hundred and ninety-six, and an investigation of the work of particular classes through ten entire school days shows an average of nearly four hundred questions a day.

The discussion of the problems raised is especially suggestive. Among them are:

1. The maintenance in the classroom, for considerable portions of time, of a high nervous tension where there should be natural and normal conditions.
2. The teacher seems to be doing most of the work of the class hour instead of directing the pupils in the doing.
3. Whenever teachers, either individually or collectively, preserve such a pace for any length of time, the largest educational assets that can be reckoned are verbal memory and superficial judgment.
4. There is no time in the mechanics of the schoolroom to cultivate the gentle art of expression.
5. There is little thought given to the needs of individuals.
6. We are coming, more and more, to make the classroom the place for displaying knowledge instead of a laboratory for getting and using it.
7. In our actual practice there is very little effort put forth to teach our boys and girls to be self-reliant, independent mental workers.

FRANK A. MANNY

BALTIMORE TRAINING SCHOOL FOR TEACHERS

Perfect French Possible. By MARY A. KNOWLES and BERTHE DES COMBES

FAVARD. Boston: D. C. Heath & Co., 1910. Pp. x+52. \$0.35.

The fact that this little treatise has reached its fifth edition demonstrates that it is accomplishing its purpose of giving to teachers and students some very valuable information concerning French pronunciation.

In their preface the authors of the book, whose familiarity with the French language is everywhere apparent, very justly assert that "since language is made up of sounds, . . . the acquisition of a new language should begin by a mastering of its sounds," and proceed to remark that it would be "pedagogically as absurd for a teacher of language to expect his pupil to speak before he can pronounce, as it would be for a music teacher to expect his pupil to play an air upon the violin before he has taught him to tune his instrument or to sound each note upon the strings."